



Billing Code: 4510-43-P

**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**Mine Safety and Health Administration**

**[OMB Control No. 1219-0026]**

**Proposed Extension of Information Collection; Ground**

Control for Surface Coal Mines and Surface Work Areas of  
Underground Coal Mines

**AGENCY:** Mine Safety and Health Administration, Labor.

**ACTION:** Request for public comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a pre-clearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed collections of information in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. Currently, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is soliciting comments on the

information collection for Ground Control for Surface Coal Mines and Surface Work Areas of Underground Coal Mines.

**DATES:** All comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** Comments concerning the information collection requirements of this notice may be sent by any of the methods listed below.

- *Federal E-Rulemaking Portal:*  
*<http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the on-line instructions for submitting comments for docket number MSHA-2018-0039.*
- *Regular Mail:* Send comments to USDOL-MSHA, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances, 201 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, Suite 4E401, Arlington, VA 22202-5452.
- *Hand Delivery:* USDOL-Mine Safety and Health Administration, 201 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, Suite 4E401, Arlington, VA 22202-5452. Sign in at the receptionist's desk on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor via the East elevator.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** **Sheila McConnell,**  
**Director, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances,**

**MSHA, at MSHA.information.collections@dol.gov (email);**  
**(202) 693-9440 (voice); or (202) 693-9441 (facsimile).**

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Background**

Each operator of a surface coal mine is required under 30 CFR 77.1000 to establish and follow a ground control plan for highwalls, pits, and spoil banks that is consistent with prudent engineering design and which will ensure safe working conditions. The mine operator is required by section 77.1000-1 to file the ground control plan with the appropriate District Manager. The mining methods employed by the operator are selected to ensure highwall, pit, and spoil bank stability. In the event of a highwall failure or material dislodgment, there may be very little time to escape possible injury; therefore, preventive measures must be taken. Each plan is based on the type of strata expected to be encountered, the height and angle of highwalls and spoil banks, and the equipment to be used at the mine. The plan is used to show how the mine operator will maintain safe working conditions around the highwalls, pits, and spoil banks. Each plan is reviewed by MSHA to ensure that highwalls, pits, and spoil banks are maintained in a safe condition through the use of sound engineering design.

## **II. Desired Focus of Comments**

MSHA is soliciting comments concerning the proposed information collection related to Ground Control for Surface Coal Mines and Surface Work Areas of Underground Coal Mines. MSHA is particularly interested in comments that:

- Evaluate whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information has practical utility;
- Evaluate the accuracy of MSHA's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- Suggest methods to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

The information collection request will be available on <http://www.regulations.gov>. MSHA cautions the commenter

against providing any information in the submission that should not be publicly disclosed. Full comments, including personal information provided, will be made available on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov).

The public may also examine publicly available documents at USDOL-Mine Safety and Health Administration, 201 12<sup>th</sup> Street South, Suite 4E401, Arlington, VA 22202-5452. Sign in at the receptionist's desk on the 4th floor via the East elevator.

Questions about the information collection requirements may be directed to the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION section of this notice.

### **III. Current Actions**

This request for collection of information contains provisions for Ground Control for Surface Coal Mines and Surface Work Areas of Underground Coal Mines. MSHA has updated the data with respect to the number of respondents, responses, burden hours, and burden costs supporting this information collection request.

*Type of Review:* Extension, without change, of a currently approved collection

*Agency:* Mine Safety and Health Administration

*OMB Number:* 1219-0026

*Affected Public:* Business or other for-profit

*Number of Respondents:* 270

*Frequency:* On occasion

*Number of Responses:* 270

*Annual Burden Hours:* 1,848 hours

*Annual Respondent or Recordkeeper Cost:* \$513

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request; they will also become a matter of public record.

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Roslyn B. Fontaine,  
*Certifying Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2018-25963 Filed: 11/28/2018 8:45 am; Publication Date: 11/29/2018]